1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
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[574] 648 more liberally these strangers abuse the Spanish nation; but if they neglect this they are taken for spies, and undergo considerable danger. They diligently watched over the safety of us Jesuits, to whom was committed the management of the colonies. If they were aware of any danger impending over us from foreign foes, they acquainted us with it immediately, and were all intent upon warding it from us. In journies, when rivers were to be crossed, the horses got ready, sudden and secret attacks of the enemy to be avoided or repelled, it is incredible how anxiously they offered us their assistance. See! what mild, benevolent souls these [648] savages possess! Though they used to rob and murder the Spaniards whilst they thought them their enemies, yet they never take anything from their own countrymen. Hence, as long as they are sober, and in possession of their senses, homicide and theft are almost unheard of amongst them. They are often and long absent from their homes, during which time they leave their little property without a guard, or even a door, exposed to the eyes and hands of all, with no apprehension of the loss of it, and on their return from a long journey, find every thing untouched. The doors, locks, bars, 674 chests, and guards with which Europeans defend their possessions from thieves, are things

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unknown to the Abipones, and quite unnecessary to them. Boys and girls not unfrequently pilfered melons grown in our gardens, and chickens reared in our houses. but in them the theft was excusable; for they falsely imagined that these things were free to all, or might be taken not much against the will of the owner. Though I have enlarged on the native virtues of the Abipones more than it was my intention to do, I shall think nothing has been said till I have made a few observations relative to their endurance of labour. Who can describe the constant fatigues of war and hunting which they undergo? When they make an excursion against the enemy, they often spend two or three months in an arduous journey of above three hundred leagues through desert wilds. They swim across vast rivers, and long lakes more dangerous than rivers. They traverse plains of great extent, destitute both of wood and water. They sit for whole days on saddles scarce softer than wood, without having their feet supported by a stirrup. Their hands always bear the weight of a very long spear. They generally ride trotting horses, which miserably shake the rider's bones by their jerking pace. They go bareheaded amidst burning sun, profuse rain, clouds